

AVIATION

The Oldest American Aeronautical Magazine

APRIL 20, 1925

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The U.S.S. Saratoga takes her first trip

VOLUME
XVIII

SPECIAL FEATURES

NUMBER
16

DEPARTMENTS

THE LAUNCHING OF THE SARATOGA

STABILITY AND CONTROLLABILITY OF AIRPLANES

GARDNER PUBLISHING CO., Inc.

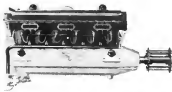
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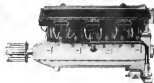
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APRIL 20, 1925

AVIATION

VOL. XVIII NO. 16

Published every Monday

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VOL. XVIII

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No. 16

The Saratoga

NONE more surprise might have been given to aeronautical observers than the launching of the aquatic carrier U. S. S. Saratoga. This latest product of naval genius is not only the last word in ships but is an experimental platform it will be a veritable flying sea mine laboratory. Entirely apart from its relationship to aviation, the Saratoga is exceptional in its superior characteristics. It has the greatest power of any ship; it has double the horsepower of the Lexington. It is the largest ship. When launched it was more nearly completed than is any other naval vessel, so that it was the greatest vessel that ever slipped down the ways. Its construction presented no record of any building, one hundred and eighty-eight feet long. Its seven hundred enlisted men will spread in variety of trades an expert crew such as was never before known afloat. With its water ship, the Lexington it will be the largest and fastest craft of its kind in the world.

It is interesting to recall at this time that it was due to the interest indicated by Japanese children that these carriers were placed in the United States. At the time of the Lancaster Arms Conference, the British had three aircraft carriers, the Japanese had an experimental ship and the United States was building. The Japanese had none, but they had an armored cruiser that had been built partly by the powers controlled by naval children. It was claimed by Japan's representatives that the ownership of this ship was inadvisable owing to popular national sentiment, but that it could be made into an aircraft carrier, although the limitation on aircraft carriers under the treaty had been fixed at 27,000 tons. The last that could be done with this 35,000 ton ship in the existing process was a maximum of 23,000 tons. As the decision of the Japanese ship was about the same as our little carriers that were to be scrapped, our Naval officers stated that the same change could be made with our ship. It was agreed by all the parties to the treaty that the construction would be allowed and in this way the United States came to complete the two carriers as aircraft carriers. It is one of these little bits of international history that may have a marked effect on future naval warfare.

The cost of the Saratoga was originally intended to be \$21,000,000 but by additional improvements that has been increased to about \$25,000,000. This appears to be a large amount of money to put into an experimental ship, particularly where there is no firm conviction among naval experts even as to what the future type of aircraft carrier will be. These types to be two distinct types; one which favors the large flying ship, the other believing that three ten thousand ton ships would have very decided advantages over the larger

carrier. The cost of the three smaller ships would be about the same as the 23,000 ton Saratoga. The larger ship would have the advantage of speed, ability to maintain speed in heavy seas, a stable platform, and to carry a large number of airplanes. The smaller ships would be able to fly their aircraft off the decks three times as fast as the larger carrier, and also to move them back on board three times as fast. They would be three times less vulnerable to attack, and when hit, the deficiency to the fleet's air power would not be so great. While the flying platform is less stable it is thought that the smaller carrier will give a percentage of flying availability that would be satisfactory, for there is a question as to the efficiency of any carrier operating in heavy seas.

These small carriers could cover much more sea area than one large ship. The smaller ships could carry more airplanes than the larger carrier. It will be noted from these differences which are usual opinions and not ones that show a great variance of thought in the new field of naval construction. One thing that can be regarded as certain, and that is that no effort will be neglected by the Naval authorities to increase the air power of the fleet, they having come to a very real realization of the necessity of aviation as a prime requirement of any navy.

Anti Aircraft

THE article that has been headed as anti-aircraft guns by the flying fraternity is bound to have an unfortunate result. While it is agreed that anti-aircraft guns make almost an unlimited percentage of loss when flying at a target in the air, the danger of the barrage is to be given more deliberate consideration. One of our Air Service officers who has had much experience in having targets for anti-aircraft guns made a very apt remark when he said that the danger from anti-aircraft fire was mainly from aircraft running into the fire rather than from direct hits. That an anti-aircraft barrage could be very dangerous in attacking airplanes flying under ten to fifteen thousand feet must be recognized as a real problem. Underestimating the strength of an opponent is always serious.

Then it seems to us that air forces should develop anti-aircraft defenses. Aircraft is the best defense against aircraft—but all the facilities should be under one command. Division of command in defense in future would be avoided by the division of functions of naval coast defense between the Army and Navy. The Coast Defense of any country will eventually come under air forces—with guns as adjuncts.

The Aircraft Carrier Saratoga Launched

Largest and Fastest Ship of its Kind to be Ready Next Year

The U.S.S. Barnegat, built to carry seventy-five planes for the Navy with six powerful engines on port and a smaller one on starboard, was launched at the New York Shipbuilding Corp. shipyard at Camden, N. J., at 1:37 p. m. on April 7. The ship's draughts and steam turbines were constructed for entrance any speed and would carry her across the Atlantic in less than four days. The ship is 508 ft. long, making her the longest naval craft in the world. The flying deck which covers her is long and wide enough to hold two airplane battalions set out to sea.

As the vessel started down the ways Mrs. Curtis D. Wilkes, wife of the Secretary of the Navy, swung a bottle of mineral water, decorated with red, white and blue ribbons, against the bow, and said:

Early preparations were taken to prevent the ship from crossing the Delaware River and into the Philadelphia port after the launching. A heavy cable was attached to buoy a short distance from the New Jersey shore and the vessel was hauled as it struck this. Anchors were thrown over board and six and ten worked the ship into a safe position.

Twenty airplanes flew over the shipyards as the burning was extinguished. Just after the ship cut in the water, twelve carrier pigeons were released by Mrs. Wither with a message to President Coolidge announcing that the ship had been launched. The birds flew to their home at the Naval Air Station in Washington and the message was delivered to the President just after 4 o'clock. (U. S. mail)

The U.S.S. *Sardago*, aircraft carrier, has been christened and launched at the New York Shipbuilding Company's yard at Camden, N. J., contemporaneously with the release of the message by circuit pages.

In Secretary Wilbur's speech after the luncheon he emphasized the Navy's relation to the Naval Arms Conference at Washington and the Arms Limitation Agreement.

"The launching of the *Serrano* is an event of great importance. It has a historical significance. It is the first ship of that name in the United States Navy. The famous ship of that name was a privateer, captured by the British in 1801, originally known as the *New York*. It was Admiral Sampson's flag ship at Santiago in the war by which the liberty of Cuba, of Porto Rico and of the Philippines were achieved. The *New York*, afterwards the *Serrano*, is now the Blue-aster, the flag ship of our Special Service Squadron. It is the only ship of that name in the United States Navy. Captain Elias reports that the ship is in fine shape and as good as the day she was commissioned. This ship is worthy of our view of the fact that the shipyard is considered to have in less than twenty years. What is unusual by the standards of the day is that by means of new developments constantly being made the twenty year old battleship would be comparatively helpless in a battle with a new ship with all the improvements and additions developed in the twenty years after the ship was built. It is not surprising that the shipyard should take the life of an airplane is three years we mean that on the average a plane is now outlasted after a lapse of three years.

"We come as the the new 'Serranos' that has just been launched at the yards of the New York Shipbuilding Corp. This ship was authorized by Congress in 1906. It was to be a battle-cruiser carrying eight 16-in. and sixteen 5-in. guns, four anti-aircraft guns. The contract for the ship was let before we entered into the World War, but the keel was not laid until 1916. It was not until 1918 that we were first called upon to improve that we should donate all our surplus tonnage to the production of destroyers, submarines and merchant ships. After the close of the World War we began the construction of the vessels authorized by the building program of 1918, which had not yet been started, and managed construction upon those which had been begun."

The midst of this tremendous building activity upon the great ships, the Conference for the Limitation of Naval Armament was called by President Harding.

"It was agreed by the signatory powers that their respective naval establishments should be limited in accordance with the Treaty then entered into. In pursuance of this agreement thirty capital ships, twenty-eight of which belonged to the United States, were scrapped. Of our new ships, those building in Colorado and West Virginia were completed and the *Surat* and *Leopington*, originally built as coal-burning steamers, were converted into the agreement, to be converted to coal-burning steamers. This agreement was a landmark in the history of naval disarmament, but it also contains evidence of the fact that it was the intention of the signatory powers to build up their navies and that one of the methods adopted for limiting

Effect of aircraft in transoceanic warfare was by limiting the size and number of aircraft carriers. Under the terms of this agreement we were authorized to complete the Lexington and Saratoga as aircraft carriers, each to have a displacement of 30,000 tons, and in addition to complete aircraft carriers having a total tonnage of 63,000 tons, reducing the total displacement of our fleet to 100,000 tons, or less than 100,000 tons. The Saratoga, with her 30,000 tons, will carry 73 planes, of which 31 will be bombing planes, that is to say, for each bombing plane carried there will be about 1,000 tons of weight in the ship.

"The total cost of the Norwicks, with all her equipment will be about \$45,000,000. Thus for each bombing plane carried she will have to have more than one thousand tons of displacement costing over a million dollars. As an illustration of her these facts may be overlooked or ignored, it may be said that in a recent examination of a record Navy officer before a Congressional Committee he was asked 'Would you rather have a forty-five million dollar battleship or a thousand bombing planes?' The questioner undoubtedly assumed that

[illegible]

correctly pointing out the several operations of this system, but the suggestion illustrates the engineering involved as a substantial addition to the naval air force.

²¹In this connection it should be observed also that a bill recommending advanced before the last Congress for the unit.

April 20, 1928

one of the others, it was provided that all shore personnel should be turned over to the new department. Thus the great ship, the *Hamble*, designed and built under the supervision of the Engineering and Construction Corps of the Navy, was to be turned over to this new organization, however, although our Naval officers were sufficiently progressive to design, construct, maintain and put in commission the new ship, it was believed by the proponents of the measure that they were not sufficiently progressive to operate the

[illegible]

The power measured by the alternators is supplied to eight main motors, two on each of the four shafts. Each of these motors pumps 30,000 gpm into the shafts which turn the propellers. The shafts are driven by the main engines. The propellers have a pitch of 10 to 20° at the designed speed, we would expect 150,000 gpm could keep up this phenomenal rate-trunk and the propellers would be turning at 1,000 rpm. In addition to the main propelling equipment of the vessel, there will be six 500 kw Diesel generators which will supply the power for the ship's auxiliaries. The auxiliaries include the vessel and for the many varied power facilities. There are over 6,000 lamps on the vessel, which vary from the 100-watt incandescent to the 100-watt fluorescent. The main compressor of the 36-in. scotch pumps. Over a thousand motors are installed, which vary in size from the 450 hp, motor-driven fans, which supply air to the wind tunnel, down to the 1/2-hp motor-driven pumps which supply water to the

"All of the supply power of this vessel is confined in a space which a central station main switch would draw into a single point, and the space is run up by the main central power station, thus making the vessel efficient in the country, a eleven times as great per horsepower as that on the foreruns. All this supply power is as important to the Commander-in-Chief whose orders may be deflected across land and ocean by other means available and transferable to the main receiver and transformed by the distribution of radio apparatus. The supply station is the base derived by waves started by the electronic spit from the

*The world mind has condensed and put into extreme nothing which embodies more of the accumulation of human knowledge than the great Sanskrit lexicon!

The address of Secretary Wilbur was followed by talks by Rear Admiral William A. Moffett, Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, Capt. Walter H. Genserd, Aide to the Secretary of the Navy and formerly commander of the Aircraft Squadron Scouting Fleet, and Comdr. Kenneth Whiting, formerly executive officer of the Langley.

Parts of Admiral Moffett's address follow:
 "The early history of naval aviation is linked up with the early development of aviation in America. Naval officers were among the first to appreciate the importance of aircraft in naval warfare. The advent of the airplane required a new

Early in 1911 the first aviation unit was formed in the Navy. It consisted of a few naval officers who volunteered for the duty and who were assigned to courses of instruction under the Wright brothers and Glenn Curtiss. The machines which they were taught to fly would today be considered terrible death traps, and their value for military purposes would be absolutely nil. But from this beginning grew a service which during the war gave an excellent account of

self, and since the war has been expanded and developed into a vital part of the Marx.

When the United States entered the Great War there were 8 qualified officer pilots in the Navy and 163 enlisted men serving with aviation units. When the armistice was signed the force had been expanded to nearly 7,000 officers, qualified or under training, and over 36,000 enlisted men.

The principal activities of naval aviation during the war were carried on from shore bases, because of the nature of naval operations. The submarine menace was the major threat confronting naval aviation, and naval aircraft were accordingly concerned with searching for and attacking the submarines. Naval air bases were established in England, France and Italy, the most secure being located at Dunkirk in France and Keflavik in England. How well these bases held their own is attested by the fact that not a single enemy bomber by aircraft was successfully attacked by submarines during the course of the war. After the war, air stations were established at the U.S. Navy's bases in England, France, Italy, and Japan.

"Once the war naval aviation has been developed along with to make it a service to the fleet at sea. Operations from have been met the exigencies of the situation as regards sub-surface warfare, but naval aviation must be an integral part of the naval forces in order to best serve them.

^aAirplanes for ships and ships for airplanes represent the overall air problem, and the solution is represented as the development of the next four years.

The aircraft carriers give rise to the planes. The carrier for naval aircraft is a new type of naval vessel which is designed to carry large numbers of every type of naval plane—fighters, bombers, torpedo planes, and scout planes are all included in the aircraft to be found on the carrier, for it is a mobile air base which travels with the fleet and carries the air force essential to the operations of the surface ships.

"We are proud to thank too much about national defense and foreign affairs officer. It is the Navy's mission to protect our unshaken resources and free flag possessions. We must take the offensive to win a war. The Navy is the first line of offense and Naval aviation is the advance guard of this offensive. We must be ready to strike at any time and cannot be effective from the shore. I must go to sea on the surface of the fleet. All the aircraft in the world based on land can not ward off a bombing attack launched from our carriers by night from an unknown point and directed for its unknown objective, hit our fleet, with adequate aviation of its own, can drive the carriers out of effective range. Both the Navy's defense the fleet and naval aviation are our most precious assets."

The very isolation that gives us defenses against possible offensive weakness and complacency the Navy's problem. We appreciate the complacency of naval aviation like those of us who fly over the sea. We could have no finer illustration of the difference of aerial aviation than the World Cruise. The outstanding feature of this flight was the triumph of individual courage and for spirited preparation over the inherent limitations of aircraft in vehicles over the sea. The flight was a triumph of the flight, and we were able to forget the sea and the absolute dependence of aircraft over the sea upon weather and

"Now the problem of finding aviators to see, with the fleet, is a difficult one. It takes a courage to go to sea. Your naval aviator must be both a seaman and an aviator, and that is a hard-earned job. The fleet must be ready to fight an action for day or night in any kind of weather, and we have a job on our hands to bring aviators up to the needs of the fleet. Aviation has conquered the air but not the sea."

Parachute Saves Another

The planes of two Marine Corps aviators were in collision 1,000 ft above the Quetzalten, Yuc., field April 6, but the pilots escaped injury. Gunner Sergeant L. E. Kirt, the tail of whose plane was severed, trapped 700 ft. with a parachute into a tree top. Gunner Sergeant Andrew Paschall drifted his machine when it was within 200 ft. of the ground and effected a landing despite the loss of half a wing. The planes were maneuvering in a group of five when the wing of Paschall's machine struck the tail of Kirt's plane by Miss.

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PUBLISHER'S NEWS LETTER

If you were to see in the news columns of AVIATION an account of the cost of aircraft to the navy with the heading, "Secretary Wilbur figures that America costs Navy Millions and Millions" you would place it in a class with other astronomical mathematical propositions which seem to give to many persons an opportunity to exercise their arithmetical skill or whatever you choose to call it.

But this cost seems insignificant from the figures given by the Secretary at the launching of the Saratogs, although he probably did not have this total in mind when he spoke. As will be seen from the address given after the launching, printed elsewhere in this issue, Mr. Wilbur referred to the statement of Admiral Scurry in which he stated that he would rather have one thousand landing planes at \$45,000 each than a battleship, and carried the assertion to its logical conclusion from the navy point of view. The Admiral, no doubt, thought of landing planes as a protective force for a country, and so such equipped on naval vessels. The Secretary, however, was in business a naval weapon comparable to the big gun, the cost of which is not the gun itself, but the cost of placing it where it will be of service to the fleet.

First, he says that it cost the navy a million dollars for each thousand tons of aircraft carrier, and this language is required to transport one thousand planes. He then tells us that the cost of the three establishments of the Navy is about equal to the value of the fleet, and in making his proposed addition to the air fleet would require a substantial addition to the present fleet facilities. "Probably not equal in value to the cost of all the carriers, but at least a substantial addition." Inasmuch as the aircraft carrier is a highly specialized ship the "substantial" additional facilities required would probably equal one half the present facilities required for battleships, or at the rate of a half million dollars for each bomber that a carrier can accommodate. (Note this word cost means present places, the value of the battleships and spotting planes is the total.) As there are to be 41 of these planes on the Saratogs, in addition to the 31 bombers, for each bomber there would have to be, at least, \$35,000 worth of auxiliary planes. So, it will be seen that with the cost of the bomber itself, \$45,000, the total cost to the Navy of each bomber would be \$1,578,000.

But the Secretary goes on further expenses in the form of upkeep, when he includes the cost of the additional naval personnel that would be required for the additional planes. This estimate at a million dollars a year for each carrier or at the rate of over \$30,000 a bomber. In fairness to this method of cost finding we feel as Mr.

Wilbur did when he said: "Of course I do not pretend to say that I have correctly portrayed the actual operations of this business, but the suggestion (illustrates the magnitude involved in a substantial addition to the naval air force)." It is more pertinent to be asked from these huge expenditures is that great sum of the people's money will have to be used to protect the battleship, or for the use of aircraft in naval warfare. The reason given for the development in that aircraft was to be used in these present development that they require ships to carry them to sea. "On the basis of the fleet," as Admiral Moffet said in his address. As people, we believe, will feel that if the cost of several aircraft carriers was expended on the development of both airplanes and battleships, that the range and other questions could be so improved that they could operate without such great expenditures for purely naval advances. Witness, the proposed navy flight of the PNN from California to Hawaii—2500 miles.

It would be still more interesting to have the Navy make a comparison of the cost of the battleship plane with the big gun. The California Carrier costs 16 ex guns. The cost is given by The World Almanac at \$25,030,311. Using the method of the Secretary in figuring the cost of battleships, there would have to be included the cost of the auxiliary ships which have been figured at about the same as the battleship, or roughly \$50,000,000 for each single ship. Thus as the three establishments according to Mr. Wilbur is about equal to the value of all the vessels of the navy, another \$50,000,000 must be added making \$100,000,000 for each 16 ex gun or \$12,500,000 a gun. Of course the absurdity of such figuring is apparent, but it is equally fantastic to build up huge totals for aircraft for the purpose of giving the public the impression that naval aviation is so costly.

Following the enactment of the Kelly Bill which permits the Postmaster General to make contracts for the extension of the Air Mail with private operators, there has been a valuable new source of reports for information about this new proposition. Nearly five thousand communications have been received from all sorts of engineers as to the new plan. With the proposition clearly stated in the bill the interest is very responsive. The Air Mail is the only transportation method that carries mail and merchandise. All other carriers are an incidental part of their main activity. This is sound practice and will doubtless come about in the no distant future with the carrying of mail by air. Meanwhile the governing wing of the Post Office Department in this field has brought to this country the greatest praise from all parts of the world.

—L. D. G.

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